



**Health Services**  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Los Angeles County  
Board of Supervisors

March 14, 2006

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TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Bruce A. Chernof, M.D.  
Acting Director and Chief Medical Officer

SUBJECT: **DHS NURSING RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES**

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Acting Director and Chief Medical Officer

**John R. Cochran III**  
Chief Deputy Director

**William Loos, MD**  
Acting Senior Medical Officer

At its March 5, 2002, meeting, the Board of Supervisors adopted a motion directing the Director of Health Services (DHS), in collaboration with the Director of Mental Health, the Sheriff, the Health Care Workforce Development Program, and Labor Management to report on issues related to nurse recruitment, retention, and training.

This is a bi-annual report and covers the period of April 11, 2005 through October 29, 2005.

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**Tuition Reimbursement/Relocation Incentive Programs**

During the last reporting period, it was mentioned that effective September 15, 2004, the revised Tuition Reimbursement policy (No: 701.3) allowed Nursing Administration at each facility and Public Health to administer the program directly. The process, now 16 months old, has proven to expedite the processing of claims as well as the distribution of reimbursement checks.

The Department re-established the Registered Nurse Relocation Incentive Program during Fiscal Year 2002-03. This program provides financial assistance to RNs who come to work for DHS for a minimum of one year and who immediately prior to accepting County employment, relocate from a distance of at least 200 miles outside Los Angeles County. During this reporting period, there were four (4) applications submitted for this program.

**Training Programs To Upgrade Skills**

Additional nursing training opportunities have been developed and implemented through the Health Care Workforce Development Program (HCWDP), an educational partnership between DHS and the Service Employees International Union, Local 660. The HCWDP established a joint Nurse Education Project Team, with the participation of nurse managers, along with staff Registered Nurses (RN), and Licensed Vocational Nurses (LVN) representing the hospital clusters.

*To improve health  
through leadership,  
service and education.*



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Listed below are the major highlights during the period April 11, 2005 through October 29, 2005:

- Six of the ten students who graduated from the LVN-to-RN nursing program at East Los Angeles Community College passed the State RN licensure exam and have now been promoted. One student needs to complete her GED requirements before taking the State exam and the other three failed the exam and are being given additional NCLEX test preparation instruction.
- Twenty-two employees completed their Registered Nurse training program at El Camino Community College in May 2005. Eight students passed the State exam for RN licensure and twelve others are being prepared to take the exam. Out of the remaining two graduates, one moved out of the State after graduation and the other still needs to complete some nursing pre-requisite classes.
- One of the five employees who completed their Licensed Vocational Nurse training at St. Francis Career College continues with her preparation to re-take the State exam for LVN licensure. Three of the four who passed were promoted to the LVN position.
- A combined total of twenty-three employees completed their LVN training at LAC+USC Medical Center's College of Nursing and Allied Health and at Olive View/UCLA Medical Center. The training concluded in September 2005. The graduating students were enrolled in an extensive NCLEX test preparation program to assist them in passing the State exam for LVN licensure.
- Thirty-three employees continued with their generic RN training program at the College of Nursing and Allied Health. The program originally started at El Camino Community College but was subsequently transferred to the College of Nursing and Allied Health. The training is scheduled to conclude in May 2007.
- Thirty-two LVNs continued with their LVN-to-RN training program at East Los Angeles Community College. The training is scheduled to conclude in May 2006.
- Thirty employees continued with their LVN training at Citrus Community College. The training is scheduled to conclude in July 2007.
- Twenty-six nursing employees completed a three-day Basic Dysrhythmia (EKG) course at El Camino Community College. The course covered the treatment of dysrhythmias, including medication therapy and nursing intervention.
- Thirteen nursing employees completed a Pharmacology: Medications and Math Calculations course at El Camino Community College.
- Seven nurses completed an Adult Physical Assessment course. The course content includes physical assessment of body system and the identification of variances seen within the adult patient population.

- Nineteen nurses completed a one-day course on "Mood Disorders" at Martin Luther King, Jr./Drew Medical Center. This was part of a series designed to enhance the caregivers' management of the psychiatric patient.

### **Tutoring And Mentoring Program – East Los Angeles Community College (ELAC) School Of Nursing**

#### **ELAC Graduates:**

- During the period April 11<sup>th</sup> – October 29, 2005, there were 55 graduates from the East Los Angeles College – School of Nursing. All graduates received DHS Tutoring & Mentoring Program services.

#### **ELAC Applicants/Hires:**

- System-wide, 14 ELAC graduates were appointed to full time staff nurse positions
- Twenty-six (26) Student and/or Senior Student Worker, Nursing positions were filled by ELAC nursing students at LAC+USC during this reporting period.

#### **Tutoring and Mentoring Activities:**

Clinicals: The Program at ELAC's School of Nursing conducted 12 weekend clinical rotations at LAC+USC Medical Center during the period April 11 – October 29, 2005. These clinical rotations continue to strengthen the student's clinical skills in small groups within the County hospital setting and provide the students with one-on-one instructor assistance, mini-lectures, and Support Assistance; ELAC's faculty tutors continued to provide mini-lectures in medical, surgical, mental health, and other courses outlined in ELAC's nursing course modules. The rotations included support assistance workshops on nursing survival skills such as assertiveness, communication, advocacy, and building self-esteem.

The mini-lectures and workshop topics included pharmacology, medication dosage calculation, neurology, physiology, cardiovascular, electrolyte imbalances, nursing process, anxiety, and personality disorders. ELAC conducted 114 mini-lectures and nursing workshops with an average of 10-12 nursing students per workshop.

Following are two charts identifying the number of ELAC nursing students that participated in the DHS program. The first chart represents the number of enrollees and the second chart provides the first time pass rate for the NCLEX-RN exam for this program. The first time pass rate, as reported by the California Board of Registered Nurses, has continued to inch up from the 60% reported in the last quarter (December 2004). The ELAC nursing department has made and instituted changes in their program, especially regarding the training and tutoring of their LVN-to-RN students.

DHS – ELAC ENROLLMENT	
QUARTER (Dates)	NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN QUARTER
Spring 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter, Summer and Fall 1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter, 2005 (April 11 – October 29, 2005).	265

QUARTER (2005)	NUMBER OF ELAC STUDENTS TAKING NCLEX-RN	FIRST TIME % PASS RATE
March	15	66.00
June	09	88.89
September	28	89.29

DHS ELAC Recruitment Activities/Events:

DHS Nurse Recruitment staff hosted or participated in the following activities:

- 04/11/05 – ELAC 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Kick-Off with DHS Presentation.
- 04/12/05 – ELAC Recruitment and Retention Table for all nursing students.
- 04/19/05 – ELAC Recruitment and Retention Table for all nursing students.
- 04/26/05 – ELAC Recruitment and Retention Table for all nursing students.
- 06/1/05 – ELAC Graduation/Pinning Ceremony.
- 09/6/05 – ELAC Nursing Program Fall Semester Kick-Off with DHS Presentation.
- 09/21/05 – ELAC Resume Writing Presentation for fourth semester students.

Joint Nursing Shortage Committee

The DHS Recruitment and Examining Office's monthly Nurse Recruiter's meeting continues to serve as the forum for discussing and planning nurse recruitment and retention activities within the Department. During this reporting period, the following was addressed:

- RN Referral and Incentive Programs

- DHS Nurse Recruitment and Retention Plan
- DHS RN Open House and CEU Events
- Nurse Recognition Week
- RN Tuition Reimbursement Program
- DHS Exposure at National and Local Nursing Job Fairs

#### **Availability Of Federal And State Funds That May Be Utilized To Enhance The County's Nurse Training, Recruitment, And Retention Efforts**

The State's Employment Development Department (EDD) allocated Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds to the Workforce Development Program (WDP) until December 2005. A new request for funding through the end of FY 2005-06 and for FY 2006-07 was submitted to the State during November 2005. The request included language that nurse training remains a high priority of WDP and the Department of Health Services and the critical need for continued financial by the State.

#### **Retraining Programs For Non-Nursing Employees Interested In Becoming Nurses**

During this reporting cycle, retraining efforts have resulted in the following:

- Thirty-two non-nursing employees continued with their generic RN training program at the LAC+USC Medical Center's College of Nursing and Allied Health.
- In May 2005, the HCWDP sponsored a pre-LVN bridge class for eighty-four non-nursing employees at Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center. Out of that group, thirty employees were selected to participate in a new LVN training program at Citrus Community College. The training started in August 2005 and is scheduled to end in July 2007.
- In June 2005, a pre-RN class was conducted at HCWDP for forty-two non-nursing employees interested in entering a registered nurse program. Out of that group, thirty employees were selected to participate in a generic RN training program at Cerritos Community College. The training started in October 2005 and is scheduled to end in September 2007.

#### **Nurse Faculty Grant Program To Enhance Nursing School Recruitment Efforts**

No new reportable activity.

#### **Preparing Employed Nursing Students For The NCLEX For Registered Nurses**

The Health Care Workforce Development Program continues to prepare graduating RN and LVN students to take the State's NCLEX test for nurse licensure. As of October 29, 2005, out of the twenty-two graduating students from the generic RN training program at El Camino Community College, eight of the students who were provided NCLEX review passed the State test, while twelve others are going through NCLEX test preparation. All ten of the graduating

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students from the LVN-to-RN training program at East Los Angeles Community College were given the NCLEX exam preparation. Six of those employees passed the State test. The twenty-three graduating students from the LVN training program at LAC+USC's College of Nursing and Allied Health and Olive View/UCLA Medical Center are being enrolled to begin their NCLEX test preparation.

The Department will continue to provide you future reports on a bi-annual basis. In the meantime, if you have any questions or require additional information, please let me know.

BAC:mf:ad  
203:018s

c: Chief Administrative Officer  
County Counsel  
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors  
Chief of Staff to the Director and CMO  
Director of Nursing Affairs  
Director of Personnel  
Department of Human Resources